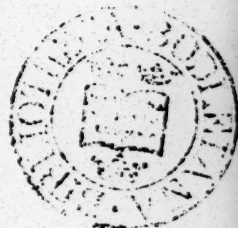


Lamentable NEWS

from *Brick-lane* in the Hamlet of *Spittle-fields*, or a Dreadful warning to such as give way to the Temptation of the Devil, in the deplorable example of Mr. JOHN CHILD once a Famous ANABAPTIST TEACHER. Who falling into DISPAIR, committed a Barbarous and unnatural MURDER upon his own Person, on the 13th of Octob. 1684. Together with the circumstances that attended it, likewise his behaviour towards such MINISTERS as prayed with him, and administered other spiritual consolations, as also what else materially happened on the sad occasion, being worthy the perusal of all Christians, and published to the end, that it might deter others from falling into the like Snare.



Certain it is, that man of himself without the Divine Assistance, is altogether unable to struggle with the sundry Temptations, wherewith the Tempter, strives to prevail against him, nor can it be imagined, if we neglect and slight those opportunities, wherein Life and Salvation is freely offered, but that we give the Holy Spirit, and as it were constrain him to withdraw himself; and then, what creature is so miserable as he, who was created to partake of unconceivable felicity, the sad effects of which, has in all ages been manifested, yet not to detain the Reader longer, from the subject matter; I shall proceed to instance, the unfortunate end, of one Mr. *John Child*; who after a long indisposendancy of mind, laid violent hands upon himself, which may serve to deter others, from giving way to the wiles, and subtil temptations of the grand Enemy of Mankind, the impartial account of which, take as followeth.

In *Brick-lane* in the Hamlet of *Spittle-fields*, lived one Mr. *John Child* by trade a Slop-seller, having formerly kept the same trade near *Ratcliffe-cross*, being then a Man of some eminency, especially amongst the *Anabaptists*, of whose Congregation he professed himself a Member, often holding forth in their publick Assemblies, contending strongly against such as opposed their Tenents, having been highly concerned in many disputes, especially against the deluded People called *Quakers*, and a great assertor of the power and prevalency, of the misemployed Excommunication used amongst them: But whether falling under their censure, or the frowns of the World occasioned it; certain it is, that for some years past, he appeared much dejected, still giving way to the tempter to prevail against him, by neglecting or rejecting the saving advice given him, by such of his Neighbours, and others that came to visit him; whose importunities could not rest from him the cause of his disorder, but he instead of applying himself to sacred matters, whereby to attain that grace, which might be sufficient for him, grew careless of himself, as also of his employment, seldom appearing abroad, and as much as he could shunning the conversation of Mankind, delighting in his melancholly recess, nor could the tears and intreaties of his Wife and Children, oblige him to alter his purpose, who importuned him to be sociable, and strive for mirth by frequenting the Company of his Neighbours, to banish those heavy thoughts, that clogged and oppressed his mind, but his answers were for the most part in sighs and groans, thereby expressing the disorder of his mind, and the war within him; whereupon several Persons prayed by him, intreating the God of mercies not to withdraw the light of his countenance from him, nor press him under the weight of his heavy displeasure, but that he out of his Infinite mercy, would give him power to prevail against his temptations, that he had ensnared him, and that Satan might not have dominion over him, but he seemed little affected, whilst these, and other the like supplications were put up to Almighty God for him, but rather inclined to intimate, that he despaired of recovery from his desperate state, and still growing worse, he fell as it were into a kind of a distraction, many extravagant expressions frequently coming from him, and his Wife fearing by the wildness of his looks, that he being wearied out with the heavy sense of his misery, would lay violent hands upon himself; she watched him as narrowly as possible, hiding or conveying out of the House all

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mischievous instruments, sending for sundry Ministers to pray with him, who willingly and out of a Christian charity came, putting up their Prayers to Almighty God on his behalf, and then expostulated with him, telling him, that Gods mercy is above all the works of his Creation, and that though our sins are as Scarlet, yet he can make us as white as Snow, intreating him to consider, that Christ dyed for sinners, and that he freely offered the Water of Life without price or money, inviting all that were weary and heavy laden, to come unto him and he would give them rest, and that God had declared, that he delighted not in the death of a sinner, but rather that he would repent and live, that if any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for the remission of sins, that it was not yet too late to lay hold of his mercy by faith, for he that came into the Vineyard at the Eleventh hour, had equal wages with the first, that the Thief on the Cross, who had past doubt been a sinner all his life long, upon his sincere repentance, was received into mercies and favour, that *Peter* who denyed his Lord in his greatest extremity, had upon his unfeigned repentance his pardon, and remission of his sins, that God will not lay upon us more than we are able to bear, if we trust in him for that, his grace is sufficient for us, that he never leaves nor forsakes us, till we leave him, by grieving his Holy Spirit. To these and many the like saving promises and offers of life and salvation, freely tendered in the Gospel, he made little answer to the purpose, but rather expressed his case to be desperate, and himself not inclinable to pray or beg for mercy, or at least not to do it sincerely as he ought, whereupon after divers Prayers put up for him, that God out of his infinite mercy, would take compassion on him, and not suffer the Tempter to prevail against him, but that he might be rescued from the jaws of ruine, and remain as a living Monument of his Fatherly compassion, towards the disobedient Sons of Men, who had slighted his grace, and cast his mercies behind their backs. The Ministers left him, desiring his Wife to be careful of him, least he should mischief himself, but notwithstanding her utmost diligence he attempted soon after to Strangle himself, having for that purpose gotten the Rope on his Neck, and about to fasten it to a hook, but by her care was timely prevented upon which he expressed great dissatisfaction saying, his burthen was so grievous that his Soul chose strangling rather than life, which rash expression, drew a Flood of tears from the Eyes of his disconsolate Wife, who with a bleeding heart, begged on him that if not for her nor his own sake, yet for the sake of his poor helpless Children, he would live and strive to resist the Temptation of the Devil, telling him, that he only pressed upon such as gave way to his Temptations, still flying from those that resisted him, and thereupon she brought his Children about him, being four in number, who joyning with her in tears, somewhat moved him to relent, insomuch, that after divers groans, tears were observed to fall from his Eyes, yet he not seeking by a sincere repentance, as by the sequel may probably be conjectured, he found the disorder of his mind little abated, still expressing himself more desirous to dye than to live, talking often to himself, and expressing his anguish in abrupt murmurs, saying, that no creature was so miserable as himself, since he was fallen under the sense of Gods heavy displeasure, refusing sometimes to eat or drink for a considerable time, and now his sad condition being spread abroad, divers from distant places came to visit him, to try if peradventure their charitable and pious admonitions could work upon him: The Ministers who often visited him, earnestly labouring therein, till in the end they had some hopes of his recovery he appearing, more moderate and rational in his answers, praying though with some abrupt stammerings, yet they no sooner left him, but he again found himself oppressed with wounding thoughts, and made it from that time his study, how he might destroy himself, till at last, his Wife wearied with continual Watchings, and his servant and Children absent, he whilst she slept stole out of the Room, and going down stairs fastened a small cord to hook or staple on the Celler stair-case, and there strangled himself; committing that violence on the 13th of October 1684. about 7 or 8 in the Evening: The Wife waking and missing him, run about the House in search of him, and soon found to be unspeakable grief, what his unhappy hands had done, whereat shrieking aloud, some of the Neighbours came in, and cut him down, endeavouring to bring him to life, but in vain, for although it appeared to most impossible, how he could at all, or at least so soon dispatch himself, by reason of the lowness of the place, yet they found him quite dead, whereupon his Wife through grief, and out of a sence, that by her drowsiness, he had miscarried, fell into a distraction, under which she yet labours, and from which God of his infinite mercy deliver her.

On the 15th instant the Coroner sat upon the Corps, after and much inquiry, found that through disorder of mind, he had layed violent hands upon himself.